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ship, and his book will appeal more strongly on this account even to the general reader. We have been particularly struck with his refusal to employ the weapons of ridicule, although he has sometimes to deal with theories which are patently absurd. He never forgets that the millennial hope, however it may impress the modern mind, has had a great and memorable history and represents a genuine type of religious thought. As a sympathetic and thoroughly competent discussion of a movement which in these days is attracting large numbers of converts the book will prove a welcome guide to the perplexed. It will help them to clearer light on the riddles of Scripture and the problems of their own time. In the larger perspective which it offers them they will learn to see the present crisis as only an episode in the age-long conflict with the Satanic powers.

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OCEANIC MYTHOLOGY

A recent¹ volume by Professor Dixon is the first systematic treatise that has appeared on the mythology of that extensive region often known as Oceania. Professor Dixon uses this term in its broadest sense, and includes not only the island areas of Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia, but also Australia and Indonesia. New Guinea is included in Melanesia, while Indonesia is restricted to the Malayan Archipelago, although the more common usage is to include under this term a somewhat larger area, especially Formosa and the Malay Peninsula. The general boundaries of these areas are indicated on the map.

The material from each of the five areas is treated in separate sections under similar headings. The myths of origins and the deluge are first outlined in more or less detail, selections being given from those from different islands. A second chapter treats of special groups of characteristic tales, provided the material is sufficient. Another is then devoted to miscellaneous tales, while a brief summary brings out the local characteristics and the relationship to other areas. In the final chapter of the book these conclusions are "briefly summarized, in order that we may gain an outline of the growth of Oceanic mythology as a whole." No attempt is made at any special interpretation, nor are any comparisons

¹ "The Mythology of All Races," Vol. IX, *Oceanic*. By Roland B. Dixon. Boston: Marshall Jones Co., 1916. xv+364 pages; 24 plates, 3 figures, map. \$6.00.

made with other regions, beyond suggesting certain affiliations, especially of the Indonesian area, with Southeastern Asia, and indicating the later Hindu and Mohammedan influences.

No one knows better than Professor Dixon the incompleteness of the material at his disposal. Many island groups are entirely unrepresented, and most of the others very incompletely. In many cases, especially in Polynesia, the material is lost forever. In others, such as parts of Melanesia, where even the number of tribes and languages is unknown, we have barely touched the surface. Nevertheless, the resemblances are such that much light is thrown on the interrelationship of the mythology of the different island groups, and the conclusions, while tentative, are at least suggestive, and the relationships suggested are usually in accord with those obtained from other lines of comparative study.

The cosmogonic myths are more highly developed in Polynesia than in any of the other areas. These "may be separated quite easily into two types: one (usually assumed to be the normal or only form) in which we have what may be called a genealogical or evolutionary development of the cosmos and the gods from an original chaos; the other, in which there is a more or less definite act of creation by a deity or deities." It is interesting to note that the first type is most developed at the extreme ends of Polynesia (Hawaii and New Zealand), while the other is more common in Central Polynesia. A comparison of all the Polynesian myths shows the same close affinity of Hawaii and New Zealand. As to outside relationships, Melanesian elements are more common in New Zealand and Micronesia, Indonesian in Hawaii.

In Melanesia there appear to be two strata: one relatively simple, with few cosmogonic myths but numerous ghost stories; and a second, more highly developed, but still by no means a unit. The latter shows affiliation with all the neighboring areas and is called Melanesian, while the former is distinguished as Papuan, as it is best represented in New Guinea.

In Indonesia the conditions are more complicated, and the results least satisfactory. After eliminating as far as possible tales and incidents from Indian and Islamic sources, a Malay and a pre-Malay, or Indonesian, group are distinguished. Though the affinities of these with the Asiatic continent are vague, Professor Dixon suggests that the Indonesian type may be related to the Mon-Khmer, and that the Malay mythology may find its antecedents among the Thai or Shan. From the most primitive people of Indonesia, the Negrito, there is no material available.

Very little of the mythology of Micronesia has been recorded, but what we have shows clear relationships to Indonesia on the one hand and Polynesia on the other.

In Australia two main divisions may be distinguished. The mythology of the central and northern portion of Australia stands more or less alone, "and so far as its peculiar tales of totem ancestors are concerned, it seems to be unique." The tales of Southern and Eastern Australia, on the other hand, show certain resemblances to those of Melanesia. From West Australia and Tasmania there is practically nothing.

In the final chapter a series of migrations are outlined as a possible explanation of the various relationships indicated by this study.

The volume is furnished with a number of excellent plates, some of which are colored. These illustrate some of the most striking masks, figures, and carvings from Oceania. There is also a full bibliography, and notes giving the source of all quotations and references. Considering the imperfection of our knowledge, and giving due regard to the cautious statements of the author, this volume may be regarded as an excellent summary of the field covered.

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BRIEF MENTION

DOCTRINAL

TAIT, ARTHUR J. *The Nature and Functions of the Sacraments*. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1917. xiv+104 pages. \$1.25.

The surprising feature of this book is its date, which should have been 1867 and not 1917. For fifty years ago it was quite in order to combat the rising tide of Tractarianism by appeals to such Reformation theologians as Bullinger and John Jewel. But that in a work of the present day such appeals should still be made is startling, and that these sixteenth-century divines should still be regarded as final sources for Christian doctrine is, to say the least, depressing. It is quite in accord with this attitude that Dr. Tait tells us (p. 59) that the very last word on sacramental research has been spoken by the three "great" scholars "Goode, Mozley, and Dimock." This statement characterizes sufficiently the nature of this treatise and its value.

B. S. E.

DE TONQUÉDEC, JOSEPH. *Introduction à l'étude du merveilleux et du miracle*. Paris: Beauchesne, 1916. xi+461 pages.

The purpose of this book is to prepare the mind of the reader for what seems to the author to be a fair-minded attitude in the investigation of the problem of miracles. That there are a priori presuppositions in all arguments and in all judging of